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GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Report Highlights:

Centre caps cotton exports at 5.5 million bales, *Biotech Authority's mandate limited to safety and efficacy*, *Export wheat rather than let it rot*, *American Sires to ensure more bovine daughters in Punjab*, *Food inflation rises again*, *6 Indian brands in top 10 whiskies; 3 in largest 10 brands*.

General Information:

Welcome to Hot Bites from India, a weekly summary of issues of interest to the U. S. agricultural community. The report includes information that has been garnered during travel within India, reported in the local media, or offered by host country officials and agricultural analysts. Press articles are included and summarized in this report. Significant issues will be expanded upon in subsequent reports from this office. Minor grammatical changes have been made for clarification.

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CENTRE CAPS COTTON EXPORTS AT 5.5 MILLION BALES

The government announced that it would allow exports of 5.5 million bales in 2010/11 (October/September), and would review the export policy in mid-November, indicating exports beyond the limit would attract a high export duty. The Textile Commissioner's Office will start the mandatory registration of export contracts from September 15, 2010. The Commerce Secretary said that the moment exports reach 5.5 million bales, a prohibitive export duty will be applied, which will be decided in November. The current export duty on cotton is Rs. 2500 per ton. (Source: [Hindu](#), 09/04/2010)

Note: Also read - [Economic Times](#), [Business Standard Article 1](#), [Business Standard Article 2](#)

BIOTECH AUTHORITY'S MANDATE LIMITED TO SAFETY AND EFFICACY

The government has pruned the mandate of the proposed Biotech Regulatory Authority of India (BRAI), which will deal only with safety and efficacy issues, leaving the decision on the commercialization of biotech products with the concerned administrative ministries. The curtailed mandate appears to be on account of disagreement between various ministries in the government. The Ministry of Environment has noted that placing the proposed regulatory body within the Department of Biotechnology creates a conflict of interest, as that the body which promotes biotechnology should not be allowed to regulate biotechnology also. In a compromise between the two, the existing Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee would be rechristened as the Environment Appraisal Panel under the proposed BRAI. The Chairman and the member secretary of the panel will be appointed by the Ministry of Environment. (Source: [Economic Times](#), 09/09/2010)

EXPORT WHEAT RATHER THAN LET IT ROT

Chief Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister Kaushik Basu said that the government should consider allowing exports of essential foodgrains like wheat rather than let it rot due to lack of storage facilities and distribution channels. He espoused the idea that India can go into swap deal with countries. He also advocated overhauling the public distribution system as a top priority item for the government. (Source: [Business Standard](#), 09/06/2010)

AMERICAN SIRES TO ENSURE MORE BOVINE DAUGHTERS IN PUNJAB

Some of America's largest artificial insemination cooperatives are peddling a breeding solution that promises 90 per cent cows to dairy farmers in Punjab. According to John Schouten, CEO of Worldwide Sires, a California based supplier of bovine semen, "the success rate of the 'sexed semen sorting' is anywhere between 85 and 99 per cent as against the normal ratio of 50 per cent cows and 50 per cent bulls." Last year, Worldwide Sires partnered with the Punjab Animal Husbandry Department, The Punjab Dairy Development Board and the Ludhiana based Dairy Farmers Association to supply 88, 000 doses of semen to Punjab farmers. This year the cooperatives are reaching out directly to dairy farmers in the state who can approach them online. (Source: [The Indian Express](#), 09/05/2010)

FOOD INFLATION RISES AGAIN

Food and fuel inflation shot up in the week ending August 13, belying the expectation that prices will soften gradually following a good monsoon. The food price index rose at an annual rate of 10.86 per cent in the week after declining for two straight weeks. It was marginally lower at 10.05 per cent a week ago. Fuel prices inched up marginally to 12.71 per cent from 12.57 per cent the week before. The Indian Meteorological Office said monsoon rains were only 1 per cent below average since the start of the season in June, but that has done little to rein in food prices yet. The stickiness in food price inflation is sure to worry the Reserve Bank of India as it tries to rein in high overall inflation. (Source: [The Economic Times](#), 09/04/2010)

6 INDIAN BRANDS IN TOP 10 WHISKIES; 3 IN LARGEST 10 BRANDS

One more whisky brand from the country has made it to the list of the 10 largest selling spirit brands in the world. Officer's Choice Whisky, the single brand from the Kishore Chhabria-headed Allied Blenders and Distillers (ABD), is now the tenth-largest selling spirit brand in the world, with sales crossing 12 million cases. The findings are part of the 2010 edition of the survey conducted annually by UK-based Drinks International, a magazine that is exclusively devoted to reporting on world spirit markets. Leading the list of the world's largest ten brands is the 63 million-case Jinro from South Korea. The ranking is across all spirit segments such as rum, vodka, brandy etc. Indian whiskies, which were unaffected by the recession, have now emerged as new power brands in the global arena. The millionaire brand list is dominated by India with six whisky brands

figuring in the list of world's top 10—Bagpiper, McDowell No.1, Officer's Choice, Original Choice, Royal Stag and Old Tavern. Johnnie Walker, Jack Daniel's, Ballentine's and Jim Beam are the other brands in the list. (Source: [Economic Times](#), 09/08/2010)

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